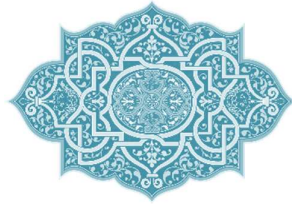


KEY POINTS – LESSON 24



Speaker: Sheikh Abdur Raheem Green¹⁶

THE INNER DIMENSIONS OF PURIFICATION

There are many among us who engage in various acts of worship but do not feel that inner connection. Many of us are solely focussed on the observable or physical aspects of these acts with little or no understanding of their inner dimensions. If we get to unveil such inner dimensions, in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah, we will feel a taste in our worship that without experiencing that we can't even imagine that.

We will, therefore, focus on the inner dimensions of common acts of worship in week 5 of our course, insha'Allah, starting with purification today.

Four levels of purification:

Purification can be classified to the following four degrees:

- 1- Purification of the body from dirt and impurity,
- 2- Purification of the organs from sins.
- 3- Purification of the heart from immorality.
- 4- Purification of the heart from others than Allah

When we read the hadith “purity is half of faith”, scholars explain that it does not just include the external purity but also includes these other levels.

The last degree is the most superior one, which can only be attained by people of deep insight. Narrow-minded people, in contrast, confine themselves to the first degree, ignoring the other important

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degrees, and so they waste most of their time in being excessive with the externalities of purification while ignoring their inner dimension.

This is contrary to the practice of the companions. The sahaba used to barely remove the dust and grease from their hands. Many times, they would walk bare-footed. They had no hesitation in prostrating in mud or on bare-earth. Umar R.A. used to make wudhu with a pot that was of Christian origin. The Prophet ﷺ is known to have taken bath using a pot that was used for eating food and had some remains in it. These great people were not overly concerned about the external dimension and only did what Allah swt asked them to do or what He permitted them to do. On the other hand, we have people in our society nowadays who consider someone walking bare-foot to be someone very strange or who do not consider it appropriate to offer salah on the ground without the prayer mat. The result of this is that we are unable to focus on the inner dimensions which is the real crux and very sought-after outcome from these acts of worship.

In today's lesson, inshaAllah we will see how the external dimensions of purification carry deep meaning and how we can move up from the first level of purification to the higher levels.

Benefits of Wudhu:

Being Grateful to Allah swt

Cleanliness is half of our faith. Whenever we are required to cleanse ourselves from ritual impurity, we use water. When it is not available, we do tayammum. This cleanliness and concern for cleanliness is a great blessing of Allah swt. We now know after centuries of research that water is one of the best anti-septics and cleansing agent and that cleaning often prevents a number of diseases. Allah swt knew this before even He created water and human beings. We accordingly have to be thankful to Allah swt for making us Muslims and giving us this opportunity to cleanse our external bodies and the inner self through the beautiful faith of Islam.

Opportunity to utilize the connection between external and the internal

It is a scientific principle that if we act to be happy and smile, we actually become happy as the happiness hormones in our body are released when they receive the signal that the person is smiling. Same goes with sadness. So what is outside us, changes the conditions of what is inside us. Similarly, we see that the feeling that we internally have is often displayed on our face and in our body language. So, the principle is that there is a connection between our internal and external state.

When we are cleaning ourselves and remain concerned about whether we have purified certain parts of our body, this external care for cleanliness also penetrates inward and gives life to our conscious. It encourages us to be concerned about the cleanliness of our inside too.

Similarly, we know from the Prophetic traditions that he ﷺ used to ask companions to straighten the rows and mention that if the rows in salah are not straight, the hearts would not remain straight and



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aligned too. This is another example of where you see external impacting the internal. We all feel that. When we are standing in straight rows, our hearts feel that we are all the same and everyone is equal in the sight of Allah – the higher levels in the sight of Allah are for those who are more righteous. We also feel the brotherhood that we are all part of one big family of believers and are brothers to each other.

Similarly, when we make wudhu, we should feel as if we are going to see Allah swt; think that all your acts of disobedience are going to be presented in front of Him; and think of the good deeds that you have done between this and the previous salah that you would be going to happily present them to Allah swt. This feeling and thinking about the presence of Allah can significantly help us in streamlining the direction of our life and shifting our focus to Allah swt alone.

Why use water for purification:

Allah swt tells us that he sends the water from the sky and it gives life to the dead earth and then it produces fruits of various kinds. Same goes with our hearts and characters too. This is the significance of water. It gives life to the dead hearts too and the fruits of great character are produced.

Reminded about our origin:

We are all made from water; People of all races, countries, and color are made from water. When we touch this water and use it, we have to remind ourselves of this fact. We are no superior or inferior to anyone based on where we belong to, where we live and how much worldly possessions we have. We have no grounds to be arrogant and oppressive.

Think about those who don't have water

When we are making wudhu, we should never waste it. We should remind ourselves of the saying of the prophet in which he commanded us not to waste water even if we are sitting at the bank of the river. When we develop this feeling, we will be able to feel the pain of those who are deprived of sufficient quantity of water and those who have to walk miles every day to obtain water for their family. Think that those people will be there to question us on the day of judgment when they are struggling to get this blessing and we are mercilessly wasting it.

Fadhail or Virtues of wudhu

The virtues of good deeds provide encouragement for doing those good deeds in the best of the ways. The following are some of the virtues of wudhu that we have to remind ourselves of when making the wudhu: to do it in a good manner

- When we wash our face, the sins of the eyes are forgiven
- When arms are washed to the elbow, the sins of hands are departed
- The sins of where our feet took us are departed when we wash our feet



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- Each part that we wash will shine on the day of judgment - think about this and shift your focus to the hereafter and think about meeting your beloved ﷺ in this state and drinking water from Al-Kauthar

Acts during the wudhu

Intention – Preparing to stand in front of Allah swt:

The first thing that we do before purification is making the intention about it in our hearts; this intention has to be in the hearts and not necessarily on tongues. Make your self aware that you are doing this for the sake of Allah alone. Tell yourself that the actions are judged based on their intentions. Do not make the salah for society or parents or colleagues or someone else. Do it for Allah. Revive your intention and question yourself why you do what you do. If it is for the sake of Allah, it should be done in a manner that shows our respect and love for Him.

Clean your heart for Allah and remove all the impurities from it. But do not allow Satan to make you abandon the good action by putting you in doubt about your intentions. If there is a doubt about Riya in your heart, pause for a minute, clean your intention and then proceed ahead with the good deed. Do not abandon even the smallest of good acts.

Saying Bismillah:

After making the intention, we have to say Bismillah. Remind yourself that you are making this wudhu with Allah's permission. There are many who are deprived of this blessing; you are enjoying an opportunity to get close to Him and acquire His please. It should also be a reminder for yourself and me that everything that happens, happens because of Allah's will. I cannot do anything at my own irrespective of whatever intellectual, physical, financial or other resources I may have.

Washing the hands

The first thing we do after the Bismillah is the washing of hands. When washing them, imaging in your mind that you are washing them so that you can hold the book of your deeds in them. is wash our hands; By cleaning them, make an intention that we want them to hold the book of our deeds in them.

Washing mouth and nose:

When washing the mouth and nose, think about the hadith of the prophet ﷺ in which he asked about what topples people on their faces in the hell-fire; he explained 'the harvest of the tongues'. We should think about purifying our tongues. Asking forgiveness from those who we have wronged and if we are unable to find them, then make utmost repentance and seek Allah's forgiveness.



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Washing body-parts and feet

When washing the body part, think that these parts will be shining on the day of judgment. Think that you are washing them to prevent them from going to the hell-fire if you don't do any major disobedience afterwards.

When washing your feet, think about the bridge of As-Sirat which everyone will need to walk through. Make a dua for your success on that day when you wash your feet.

CONTEMPLATION TASK FOR LESSON 24

Summarize the points discussed in today's lesson and do a wudhu while thinking about all the things we have discussed today. Make this a routine practice.

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